CONFIDENTIAL EXCISE INCOMING
Department of State TELEGRAM

PAGE 01 SAN SA 08325 292008Z 5128 SAN SA 08325 292008Z
ACTION ARA-16

INFO OCT-01 AOS-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-01 INR-10 L-03
NSAE-00 PA-01 SPRS-02 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00
ICAE-00 INRE-00 EUR-12 SY-05 STE-00 OCT-02 HA-06
IO-14 OMB-01 TRSE-00 A-02 ACDA-12 AID-07 CA-01
OC-06 CCO-00 FBO-05 OCS-06 OPR-02 SR-04 USSS-00
PL-02 /145 W

----------108338 292006Z /17

O R 291911Z NOV 80
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1341
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY MEXICO
AMEMBASSY PANAMA
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PN//INTAFF
DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 8325

ROME FOR VATICAN OFFICE

E.O. 12065: GDS 11-29-86 (WHITE, ROBERT E.) OR-M
TAGS: PINS PINT SHUM ES
SUBJECT: IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH OF ASSASSINATION OF FDR LEADERSHIP

1. (C-ENTIRE TEXT)

2. THE JUNTA AND THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE HAVE BOTH ISSUED BULLETINS REGRETTING THE ASSASSINATIONS. ON FRIDAY AFTERNOON, NOV. 28, THE JUNTA CALLED REPORTERS TO THE PRESIDENTIAL PALACE FOR AN INFORMAL CONFERENCE. PRESENT WERE FOUR OF THE FIVE JUNTA MEMBERS -AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, COL. MAJANO IS OUT OF THE COUNTRY) AND THE MINISTER AND VICE MINISTER OF DEFENSE. THE ESSENCE OF THEIR MESSAGE WAS THAT THEY DID NOT WANT TO IMPOSE PRESS CENSORSHIP BUT THAT UNLESS THE JOURNALISTS REFRAINED FROM REPORTING RUMOR AND SPECULATION, THEY MIGHT BE FORCED TO THIS TYPE OF ACTION.

3. MEMBERS OF THE ARMED LEFT SEIZED VARIOUS RADIO STATIONS LAST NIGHT TO DECLARE THE GOVERNMENT GUILITY OF THE ASSASSINATION OF THE FDR LEADERS AND URGING THE PEOPLE TO JOIN WITH THE REVOLUTIONARY FORCES AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT. NO SPECIFIC ACTION WAS OUTLINED.

4. IN SATURDAY MORNING'S LA PRENSA GRAFICA THERE APPEARS A STATEMENT BY EYEWITNESSES FROM THE SOCORRO JURIDICO. THIS IS AN UNCOMMONLY FORTHRIGHT STATEMENT GIVEN THE DANGER UNDER WHICH THESE PEOPLE LIVE. IT ACCUSSES THE SECURITY FORCES OF PARTICIPATION IN THE KIDNAPPING OF THE FDR LEADERS AND STATES THAT "A MAJORITY OF THE KIDNAPPERS WERE DRESSED IN CIVILIAN CLOTHES." FULL TEXT FOLLOWS, BY SEPTEL.

5. LAST NIGHT [redacted] THE [redacted] AMBASSADOR TOLD ME THAT MAJANO AND ALL HIS FAMILY HAD FLED TO PANAMA. THIS MORNING THERE APPEARS IN THE NEWSPAPERS A SHORT ANNOUNCEMENT STATING THAT COLONEL MAJANO IS OUT OF THE COUNTRY FOR A FEW DAYS BUT WILL RETURN TO HIS DUTIES NEXT WEEK.

6. IN VARIOUS CONVERSATIONS I HAVE HAD WITH DIPLOMATS, AMERICAN CITIZENS, AND SALVADORANS, I HAVE YET TO FIND ANYONE WHO DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT THE SECURITY FORCES WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ATTACK. A WELL-CONNECTED [redacted] TOLD ME THAT THE SECURITY FORCES HAD MADE A TOTAL MESS OF THE SITUATION. IT WAS ONE THING, HE SAID, TO HAVE THE FDR BODIES DISAPPEAR IN A QUIET AND EFFICIENT MANNER BUT THIS CLUMSY, OBVIOUS, AND BRUTAL ASSASSINATION WOULD GIVE THE LEFT A NEW CAUSE AMONG THE PEOPLE. HE SPECULATED THAT SOME OF THE SECURITY FORCES MAY HAVE DELIBERATELY ENGINEERED THE KIDNAPPING AND ASSASSINATION IN THIS OBVIOUS WAY IN ORDER TO ENSURE AN ARMED CONFRONTATION WITH THE LEFT. THIS COMMENT WAS MADE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE RECENT NEWS THAT THE LEFT HAD STOLEN THE BODY OF ENRIQUE ALVAREZ AND TAKEN OVER THE CATHEDRAL IN ORDER TO STAGE A PUBLIC FUNERAL WITH A MASS ATTENDANCE.

7. LAST NIGHT A POWERFUL BOMB EXPLODED IN FRONT OF THE METROPOLITAN CATHEDRAL. NEWSPAPER REPORTS SUGGESTED THAT THE BOMB MAY HAVE BEEN PLACED INSIDE A VEHICLE. THE EXPLOSION WAS REPORTED TO HAVE INJURED FIVE PEOPLE IN THE CATHEDRAL AND SERIOUSLY DAMAGED THE STRUCTURE'S FACADE. RED CROSS VOLUNTEERS EVACUATED THE INJURED AND, ACCORDING TO NEWS REPORTS, WERE ALSO PLANNING TO EVACUATE OTHER MEMBERS OF A GROUP THAT TOOK THE CHURCH IN PROTEST OVER THE FDR ASSASSINATIONS. THERE ARE SOME REPORTS THAT THE BODIES OF THE DEAD LEFTIST LEADERS ARE INSIDE THE CATHEDRAL.

8. SAN SALVADOR IS MUCH QUIETER THAN USUAL. PEOPLE ARE AFRAID. THE TELEPHONE HAS BEEN RINGING OFF THE HOOK FROM AMERICAN CITIZENS, UNKNOWN TO THE EMBASSY, ASKING TO BE PLACED WITHIN THE WARDEN SYSTEM OF THE E AND E PLAN. ALL OF THESE CALLERS ARE MARRIED TO SALVADORANS.

9. KEY MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNMENT WERE OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY WHEN THE EVENT TOOK PLACE, E.G. DUARTE, CHAVEZ MENA, VIEYTEZ. MY IMPRESSION IS THAT A GREAT MANY MEETINGS ARE TAKING PLACE NOW AS THEY TRY TO FIGURE OUT A WAY TO MEET THE MOST SERIOUS CRISIS SINCE THE ASSASSINATION OF ARCHBISHOP ROMERO.
WHITE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY [redacted] DATE 8 JUL 1982
PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

CONFIDENTIAL